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S E C R E T OTTAWA 003417

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [MARR](#) [MOPS](#) [PREL](#) [AF](#) [NL](#) [CA](#)

SUBJECT: NETHERLANDS/AFGHANISTAN: CANADA UNABLE TO BOOST
DUTCH DEPLOYMENT

REF: THE HAGUE 3100 AND PREVIOUS

Classified By: POL M/C Brian Flora. Reason 1.4 (b) and (d).

1.(S) National Defence (DND) Director of NATO Policy Col. Neil Anderson (please protect) informed polmiloff on November 16 that Canada would not/not be able to accommodate a Dutch request for 100 troops to support the Dutch deployment to Oruzgan under ISAF Stage III. He volunteered that the negative response was conveyed via "mil/mil channels"-- the same channel in which the request was made -- following a CF internal assessment. Anderson added that discussions with the Dutch military were continuing, to determine if there are other ways (NFI) in which Canada could lend support.

12. (S) Anderson said that key factors in Canada's decision were the likely negative impact on CF availability for potential "other" operations (above and beyond its February 2006 commitment to ISAF III) and cost. DND apparently has reached the "outer limits" of the funding for Afghanistan that was authorized by Cabinet earlier this year, he said.

13. (S) COMMENT: The possibility that the minority Liberal government will be brought down by the end of November and elections called for early 2006 is almost unavoidable. Though unlikely to affect Canada's current military commitments in Afghanistan, the domestic political dynamic is unpredictable and Canada's professional military are sensitive to becoming "a factor," even incidentally, in the governing party's all-out effort to secure a parliamentary majority in the next election. A retired Canadian military officer who keeps close tabs on defense issues recently shared his views on the Defense Minister's and Chief of Defence Staff's ongoing public diplomacy campaigns which underscore the possibility of Canadian casualties in Kandahar. While praising their pro-active approach, our contact had reservations about the effectiveness of the effort if/when casualties are incurred during current and planned deployments in southern Afghanistan, given the public's aversion to military (vs. "peacekeeping") operations. END COMMENT.

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